all India merit basis.

As per Government policy, the minimum educational qualification for recruitment in Army as Soldier (GD) is matriculation/Xth class pass. However, to provide a fair opportunity for recruitment to citizens from backward regions/belonging to backward communities, certain special dispensation in educational qualification for recruitment as Soldier (GD) has been provided by the Government. So far as Jammu region is concerned, educational qualification as above has been relaxed to class VIII pass for the whole of the region except Kathua District and Samba Tehsil. This dispensation is valid upto 31st March 2001.

Deficiency in Design of MIG-29

1379. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MIG-29 does not meet IAF standards;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Russian manufacturers of MIG-29 accepted deficiency in design of the aircraft; and

(c) what is the present status of MIG-29?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The aircrafts are performing satisfactorily.